

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims below will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-22 (Canceled)

23. (Original) An optical device comprising:

- a layer of transparent material having a desired curved surface configuration;
- a layer including a variable refractive index material having a positive or negative dielectric constant anisotropy;
- at least two transparent electrodes arranged to sandwich said layer of the transparent material and said layer including the variable refractive index material; and
- a driving device for always supplying a voltage substantially equal to or greater than an amplitude of a voltage establishing static and vertical alignment in said variable refractive index material.

24. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein said voltage from said driving device is an AC voltage having a primary frequency in a range of 1 Hz to 100 Hz.

25. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein said variable refractive index material is nematic liquid crystal.

26. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein said at least two transparent electrodes are substantially in parallel.

27. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein the surface configuration of the transparent material layer on the side of said layer of the variable refractive index material is a convex lens, a concave lens, a fresnel lens, a prism array, a lens array, a lenticular lens or a diffraction grating, or a curved surface formed by a combination thereof.

28. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein an alignment layer for aligning the liquid crystal in one direction is provided on the surface of said transparent electrode on the side of the layer including the variable refractive index material.

29. (Original) An optical device comprising a plurality of optical devices defined in claim 28, said plurality of optical devices being arranged in series so that the ordering directions of the respective alignment layers are perpendicular to each other.

30. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein a light is incident to a surface of said layer including the variable refractive index material having a more uniform alignment.

31. (Original) An optical device as set forth in claim 23, wherein one of said transparent electrodes is replaced with an electrode reflecting at least a part of a light incident to said one of said transparent electrodes.

Claims 32-61 (Canceled)